

Snow and Ice Update December 14, 2009

This is an anecdotal compilation of reports from the Committee on Disabilities, the Public Transportation Sub-Committee, and the Bike and Pedestrian Committee. These observations are intended to advise parties involved with snow removal on how to improve these efforts. We also appreciate the work that many have made to achieve passable and safe, walkways and roads.

Overall Reports

- Councilors David Narkewicz and Marianne LaBarge received complaints about the excessive speed of plows and the slow rate of clean up.
- Patti Shaughnessy reported that the police department received 30 complaints about property owners failing to shovel their snow. All were resolved except two (one was an abandoned property while the other has a sale pending).
- Councilor LaBarge observed that there was no snow shoveling alert posted on channel 15.
- Many observed overall progress over past snow removal efforts. While problems were reported, a sense of improvement was noted.

Downtown

- The day of the storm considerable effort was observed. Workers with the BID, shopkeepers, and property owners were all seen cleaning the walkways.
- Some people passing in cars shouted toward the various workers downtown to clean the roads indicating confusion on the part of some citizens around peoples roles.
- Snow removed from the sidewalks downtown was not placed in the gutter as discussed, but piled along the curb as in the past.
- The corner of Fruit Street and Old South was clean of snow. In the past this had been a problem location.
- The sidewalk from Lyman to Main Street on South Street was very nicely done.
- The bus stop at Pulaski Park was done reasonably well.
- The curb cuts on Crafts Avenue and Masonic were marginally cleared.
- The parking for municipal employees was plowed in a haphazard way.
- Abandoned bikes obstructed the clean up of bike racks at several locations.

Florence and Outlying Areas

- Councilor LaBarge reported that Route 66 and side streets in her ward were not done as of 3 PM on the day of the storm. Streets slow to be plowed were Longview, Crestview, Ellington, Brookside. She reported that citizens were left wondering about when roads would be cleared. Some lawns were also plowed.
- Bus stops in Florence were reported left un-shoveled.
- Several properties were reported un-shoveled along Ryan Road. The reporter was encouraged to call the police.
- The side walk on the Bliss Street Bridge had snow plowed onto the walkway.
- Brookwood was treacherous the day of the storm but perfect after 24 hours.

Suggestions

- Brief hourly reports on progress through radio stations. Let citizens know how things are moving forward and obstacles that may be hindering clean up.
- Posting reminders to remove snow on Channel 15.
- An effort to better coordinate downtown removal snow activities to reduce overall workload and meet discussed goals.
- A seasonal effort to remove all abandoned bikes in November in preparation for winter.
- Considering a parking ban for bikes to allow clean up of bike racks.
- Continue to remind citizens that they are encouraged to call the police and report un-cleared walkways.